

REMARKS

Claims 1-38 are pending in the application.

Claims 2, 11-17 and 23-38 are allowed and claims 4-6 and 10 are objected to.

Claims 1, 3, 7-9 and 18-22 stand rejected. Claims 18-22 have been cancelled herein.

Claims 3-6 and 10 have been amended herein and claims 18-22 have been canceled.

Claim 3 has been amended by incorporating therein "sequence number pointing the addresses in the block" for clarifying the subject matter. The proposed amendments of claim 3 are based on the description on page 22, lines 5-7 and lines 18-22. No new matter is entered.

Claims 4-6 and 10 have been rewritten in independent form respectively by incorporating therein the subject matter of the present claim 1.

Claim Rejections

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 3 has been clarified as mention above. It is respectfully requested the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Larsson et al., (6,128,295)(Larsson) in view of Oba et al., (6,262,986)(Oba).

The Office Action asserts that **Larsson** teaches all the limitations of independent claim 1 except a scheduling processing module for starting a retrieval from within plural pieces of transmission request data from the output line indicated by the second pointer, and selecting an output line that is not ensured by other input lines.

Oba describes in Fig. 2 a scheduling information management unit 16 in a packet scheduling apparatus 11. The Office Action refers to this as disclosing a scheduling processing module as recited in Applicant's claim 1.

Claim 1

The “OCH 206 (Output cell handler)” of **Larsson** is asserted to be similar to “an address management unit” of applicant’s claimed invention (fig. 2 of Larsson) (Office Action page 3).

Larsson discloses that output cell handler (OCH) 206 performs address translation from the internal channel number to the outgoing VP/VC value (VPI/VCI from the CDR record) (Column 6, lines 19-21).

Further, **Larsson** discloses that the internal channel number shown in “ICI” in FIG.7 is used as an index for locating the particular record in CDR area 110A(shown in FIG.4).

However **Larsson** discloses only the feature of performing numerical conversion from a number (internal channel number) that is internally processed by the system to the address number (VPI/VCI) that is used actually in communications.

Larsson does not disclose or suggest the feature of segmenting an address of the packet buffer memory unit into the fixed-length blocks for a plurality of packets, and managing the address on a block basis.

Applicant’s claimed invention includes an address management unit segmenting an address of the packet buffer memory unit into fixed-length blocks for a plurality of packets, and managing the address on a block basis.

Larsson does not refer to the feature of reducing a memory capacity by managing the address of cell buffer (90/92) on a block basis.

It is respectfully submitted the combination of features of applicant’s claim 1 including the address management unit would not have been obvious in view of the combination of **Larsson** and **Oba**.

Claim 3

Claims 3 depends on claim 1, and therefore, include all the limitations of claim 1. For at least the foregoing reasons and because claim 3 recites additional distinguishing features, it is respectfully requested the rejection of claim 3 be withdrawn.

Claim 7

Larsson discloses only a summary of an ATM architecture. For example **Larsson** describes the features of ATM (“ATM is a packet-oriented transfer mode which uses asynchronous time division multiplexing techniques”, “Packets are called cells and have a fixed size”, and so on)(Column 1, lines 24-36).

In contrast applicant’s claim 7 includes features which are not described in the **Larsson** reference, for examples: the packet buffer memory executing time-division-multiplexing of the fixed-length packets of the plurality of input lines onto one signal input line in an established manner, and includes memories disposed in parallel corresponding to every input line before being multiplexed.

Therefore, it is not obvious to a skilled artisan to combine the teachings of **Larsson** and **Oba** to arrive at the present invention of Claim 7. In addition claims 7 depends on claim 1, and therefore, include all the limitations of claim 1. For at least the foregoing reasons and because claim 7 recites additional distinguishing features, it is respectfully requested the rejection of claim 7 be withdrawn.

Claims 8 and 9

Claims 8 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over **Larsson** in view of **Caldara et al.**, (6,141,346) (**Caldara**).

It is respectfully submitted this rejection must include the **Oba** reference because claims 8 and 9 depend on claim 1.

Larsson and **Oba**, as pointed out above generally disclose features of ATM-SW.

However **Larsson** does not disclose or suggest the feature of segmenting an address of the packet buffer memory unit into the fixed-length blocks for a plurality of packets, and managing the address on a block basis as claimed in 1 as an address management unit segmenting an address of the packet buffer memory unit into fixed-length blocks for a plurality of packets, and managing the address on a block basis. **Larsson** does not describe reducing a memory capacity by managing the address of cell buffer (90/92) on a block basis.

It is respectfully submitted the combination of features of applicant's claims 8 and 9 including the address management unit would not have been obvious in view of the combination of **Larsson**, **Oba** and **Caldara**.

It is also respectfully submitted that claims 8 and 9 include a unique combination of features which are not suggested in the combination of references **Larsson**, **Oba** and **Caldara**. In particular there is no suggestion which would lead one skilled in the art to make such a combination of prior art. Thus even if all the elements were present in the cited references, it is well-established that a combination of limitations, some of which separately may be known, may be a new combination of limitations which is nonobvious under the condition of 35 U.S.C. 103. Moreover, "an examiner may often find every element of a claimed invention in the prior art." In re Rouffet, 47 USPQ3d 1453, 1457 (Fed. Cir. 1998) (reversing PTO obviousness rejection based on lack of suggestion or motivation to combine reference).

The only such suggestion provided has been from applicant's own disclosure.

For at least the foregoing reasons and because claims 8 and 9 recites additional distinguishing features, it is respectfully requested the rejection of claims 8 and 9 be withdrawn.

Claims 18-22

Claims 18-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Oba in view of Steely et al., (6,249,520). Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Oba in view of Linville et al., (6,026,075). Claims 21 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Oba in view of Ha-Duong et al., (6,181,678).

Claims 18-22 have been cancelled herein obviating these rejections.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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